

Union Historic District

Roughly along Main, Dunlap, Pump, and Elmwood streets north from Royal Oak Field, including Paradise and Monument fields

Union

Three buildings in the Union Historic District, the Old Baptist Church, the Bishop Clair House, and the Ames Methodist Church, are significant for their association with Matthew W. Clair, Sr., a prominent figure in black history in West Virginia. Clair was born and raised in Union but later moved to Charleston, where he committed himself to the Methodist faith at Simpson Methodist Episcopal Church, one of West Virginia's largest and most famous black churches (see also Simpson Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church, Kanawha County).

Clair's most famous pastorate was at the Asbury United Methodist Church in Washington, D.C., where he served from 1897 to 1902 and had a hand in the building of the fine Gothic Revival style building (see also Asbury United Methodist Church, District of Columbia). Known for his excellent speaking ability, Clair always drew large crowds. The Union Historic District includes his home and the two churches in Union at which he preached most often.
[CAB 12/6/90, 90001844]